

SAFETY AT WORK

Falls from Ladders

29 CFR 1910.25 and .26

What could happen on a ladder?

Ladders are uncomplicated and simple to use, but you shouldn't take ladder safety for granted. Workers get hurt using ladders because:

1. They slipped or fell off,
2. They had wet, greasy, or oily shoes,
3. They were holding object(s) with one or both hands,
4. They were using the wrong ladder for the job,
5. The ladder was poorly maintained and it failed,
6. They weren't shown how to inspect ladders,
7. They were not trained on the safe use of ladders,
8. The ladder was not secured or tied down.

You can prevent falls from ladders by:

1. Choosing the right ladder,
2. Inspecting ladders,
3. Using ladders properly, and
4. Keeping ladders in good shape.

Choosing the Right Ladder

Consider the type of ladder you need to do the job safely.

1. Do you need a step ladder or a straight ladder?
2. What length do you need?
 - It should be tall enough to reach what you need to work on without YOU having to reach out or up.



3. Do you need a non-conductive ladder for this job?
 - A *dry* wood ladder or a fiberglass ladder **will not** conduct electricity.
 - A metal ladder **will** conduct electricity.
4. How strong does the ladder need to be?
 - How much weight and stress is this job going to place on the ladder?

Inspecting the Ladder

Check the ladder for:

- Broken or bent rungs, side rails, or spreaders,
- Sharp edges and splinters,
- Securely attached hardware and fittings (rivets, braces, etc.),
- Movable parts operate freely without binding or undue play,
- Rungs that are free of oil and grease,
- Safety feet are in place and operable,
- Frayed or badly worn rope,
- Stability (does the ladder bow or lean to one side when weight is put on it?),
- Other defective, corroded, broken, or worn out parts.

Using Ladders Properly

DO NOT USE ladders with broken or missing steps, rungs, or cleats, broken side rails, or other defective parts.

Ladders must be placed on stable, level surfaces, unless you tie them off to a solid object to prevent movement.

When going up and down the ladder you should: 1) face the ladder, 2) have at least three points of contact with the ladder at all times, and 3) never carry something that could cause you to lose your balance or footing and fall.

Ladders must not be placed on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to attain additional height.

Unless designed to do so, ladders must never be tied or fastened together to make them longer.

Ladders must not be used in a horizontal position as a platform, runway, or scaffold.

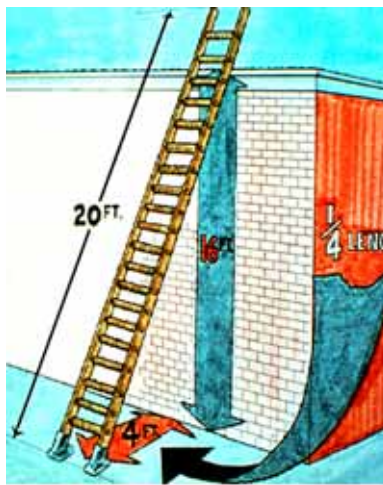
Ladders must not be placed in front of doors opening toward the ladder unless the door is blocked open, locked, or guarded.

When using a straight ladder, make sure that for every four feet the ladder goes up, the base of the ladder comes out one foot.

The top of straight ladders must have a support under both rails.

Don't climb on ladders made by fastening cleats (or boards) to a single rail.

Portable ladders are rated and designed as one-person ladders.



No ladder should be used to gain access to a roof unless the top of the ladder extends at least three feet above the point of support, at eave, gutter, or roofline.

Never step on the top two steps of step ladders.

Never step on the top four rungs of a straight ladder.

A ladder must not be moved, shifted, or extended while someone is on the ladder.

Never climb the bracing on the back of step ladders, it's only there for support.



Maintaining Ladders

Follow the ladder manufacturers' recommendations for using and maintaining your ladders.

Keep ladders out of the weather and away from corrosive chemicals, if possible.

Make sure the rungs and steps of metal ladders have a non-slip surface on them.

Keep all parts of ladders free of oil, grease, and other slippery substances.

Remove any splinters or rough edges that have appeared on ladders.

Do not overload ladders.

Don't drop or throw ladders.

Lubricate metal bearings of locks, wheels, pulleys, etc. frequently.

Replace worn or frayed rope on ladders.

Inspect all ladders frequently. Ladders that have developed defects must be taken out of service for repair or destruction and tagged or marked "Dangerous, Do Not Use".